

Session II. Review of “ARF Work Plan on CTTC” 2009-2010 Briefing Note

Background

1. The Work Plan received support from the Ministers at the 15th ARF in July 2008. The Ministers tasked the Senior Officials to work out the details of the Work Plan, including specific projects they may wish to submit to the Work Plan, and the list of Lead Countries or Co-Sponsors. At the 16th ARF in Phuket on 23 July 2009, the Ministers adopted the ARF Work Plan.

Latest developments on the implementation of the Work Plan

2. Lead countries for the implementation of the Work Plan:
 - Thailand submitted its interest to be a lead country in the priority area of illicit drugs (pending nomination of non-ASEAN lead country).
 - Philippines and United States submitted its interest to take the lead in the area of bioterrorism and bio-security.
 - Russia agreed to lead the priority area of cyber security and cyber terrorism (pending nomination of ASEAN lead country).
3. Current ongoing projects for future implementation the following:
 - Priority area no. 1: Illicit drugs
 - Safe Handling and Disposal of Seized Chemicals, proposed by Thailand (proposal pending further follow-up from Thailand.)
 - A future project on narcotics control (not yet specified), proposed by the United States.
 - Priority area no. 2: Bioterrorism and biosecurity
 - ARF Disease Detection and Surveillance Workshop, September 2011
 - Future project on bioterrorism issues, proposed by United States, ASEAN Member State – TBD)
 - Priority area no. 3: Cyber security and cyber terrorism
 - ARF Cybercrimes Investigations Tabletop Exercise (Proposed by United States and ASEAN Member State - TBD)
 - State and Terrorist Use of Proxies in Cyberspace Capacity-building Workshop (Proposed by United States and ASEAN Member State - TBD)
4. Completed project:
 - Priority area no. 2: Bioterrorism and biosecurity:
 - ARF Bio-Risk Management Workshop, September 2010, co-sponsored by Philippines, Australia and United States.
 - Priority area no. 3: Cyber security and cyber terrorism:
 - ARF Cybercrime Capacity-Building Conference, Bandar Seri Begawan, 27-28 April 2010, co-chaired by Viet Nam and the United States. The project on Training Workshop on Enhancing Cooperation in Fighting Cyber Financial-Economic Scams, previously proposed by Viet Nam, has been combined and implemented at the Conference.

Review of the Work Plan Implementation

5. Overall, the progress of implementation of the Work Plan has been very limited. The Work Plan was developed to help focus ARF cooperation on CTTC. Three priority areas are identified and agreed among the ARF participants for the ARF to develop projects and activities related to them. At the implementation stage, however, only priority areas of bioterrorism and biosecurity as well as cyber security and cyber terrorism have moved forward with proposals for activities.
6. The ARF Work Plan on CTTC has been developed for the implementation period of 2009-2010. During the course of implementation to-date, the following challenges have been identified:
 - Nomination of Lead Countries. As of now, nomination of Lead Countries is not completed. The absence of Lead Countries has delayed the progress of the implementation of the Work Plan.
 - Lack of ownership by the ARF participants. During the two-year period of implementation (2009-2010), only less than a handful of countries volunteered to lead the implementation of the Work Plan priority areas and proposed activities under these areas.
 - Brief timeline for implementation. The Work Plan was adopted by the Ministers at the 16th ARF in July 2009. As such, the ARF participants only had less than 1.5 years until the end of 2010 to prepare proposals for activities. In the ARF process, proposals for activities have to be endorsed by the ARF SOM which convenes only once a year in May. Therefore practically, the implementation of the Work Plan only took place during the year 2010.

Way Forward

7. As the new ARF Work Plan on CTTC is now being developed, the ARF may consider the following:
 - ARF participants need to consider reviewing the current elements of the Work Plan and discuss on the new timeline for its future implementation.
 - Priority areas should be focused on issues where ARF could bring the most added value given its geographic focus, participation, or past work.
 - ARF can also consider aligning the priority areas with those of the SOMTC Work Programme.
 - Nomination of Lead Countries should be secured before the new Work Plan is submitted for adoption by the Ministers.
 - The Lead Countries should play a more active role in initiating projects or inviting ARF participants to propose projects.

